GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1117
ANSWERED ON:21.07.2017
Application of Plastic in Food Products Packaging
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Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

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(a) whether the application of plastic in food products packaging is burgeoning/ increasing which is harmful for health and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Government has conducted any study in this regard; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to curb the use of plastic in food packaging?

Answer

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND
FAMILY WELFARE
(SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULASTE)
(a): Food is packed in containers made from paper, cardboard, plastics, metals, glass or their combination. Out of these packaging materials, more than 50% share is of plastics. Plastic is one of the most commonly used packaging materials for food products worldwide. If manufactured as per laid down standards and used properly for intended purpose, plastic packaging materials do not pose any harm to the health of the consumers. In fact, they help in keeping the food product safe by avoiding any contamination to the food and also increase the shelf life of the product. They are also tamper proof and reduce chances of adulteration. They are also corrosion resistant and chemically inert.

(b) & (c): To check the present state of affairs with respect the different packaging materials, a study on the chemical contamination of food through packaging material has been entrusted to the Indian institute of Packaging (IIP) and the National Test House (NTH). IIP has been given the responsibility to undertake the study on the chemical contamination from packaging material used for packaged food items; focussing majorly on plastics, paper and other materials. NTH has been given the responsibility to undertake the study on chemical contamination from loose packaging material, including paper cups, plates, plastic cups, carry bags and allied material.